

## **USDA Farm to School Website, Email, and Site Visits – Opportunity to submit request for a USDA Farm to School Tactical Team visit**

USDA has developed a Farm to School website located at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/F2S/Default.htm>, and a new email address specifically for Farm to School communications ([farmtoschool@fns.usda.gov](mailto:farmtoschool@fns.usda.gov)). The website contains general information about Farm to School, as well as the *Know Your Food, Know Your Farmer* initiative and the USDA Farm to School Tactical Team (Tactical Team). In the near future, the website will feature information on how to start Farm to School activities, how to purchase locally, policies related to Farm to School, solutions to overcoming obstacles, food safety, progress on the Tactical Team Initiative, and much more. We encourage you to visit the website frequently to learn about the latest events regarding Farm to School.

The purpose of the Tactical Team is to support local and regional food systems by facilitating linkages between schools and their local food producers. The Tactical Team will be visiting nine school districts of varied demographics and characteristics to analyze and assess variables that support or deter from the success of Farm to School activities. During the visits the Tactical Team would like to meet with school administrators (e.g., food service director, principal, superintendent, Agriscience program coordinator, etc.), farmers, and community partners to best understand the school's Farm to School activities and identify obstacles, trends, and best practices.

The Tactical Team has several goals related to the development mechanisms to assist schools in accessing local markets; enabling food producers to effectively service their local schools; and facilitating communication between interested stakeholders. USDA expects the varied site visits will assist the Tactical Team in meeting these goals.

Through the above listed website, the Tactical Team has provided school districts participating in the Child Nutrition Programs an opportunity to express their interest in being considered for a USDA Farm to School Tactical Team site visit. Once the district has submitted their request for consideration, the Tactical Team will respond via email as confirmation of the request and seek to learn more about the school's Farm to School efforts through the food service director. **The requests are due to FNS by January 31, 2010.**

USDA expects that school district interest will exceed their resources and abilities to visit nine sites in 2010; therefore, they plan to keep a database of all schools who requested a visit so they can keep them up to date on any new Farm to School developments.